

## **PRAYER AND PRAISE**

### **Our Church family**

- Pray for those for whom mental health makes daily life a struggle.
- Pray for those who experience physical pain, and for friends and family who help with care.
- Anne Loewen has been diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma. Your concern is appreciated and prayers are welcomed.

### **Our Community**

- Pray for Ken Warkentin (MCM's Executive Minister), and all our church leaders at all levels of our conference.
- Mennonite Church Canada is pleased to announce that Doug Klassen has accepted the call to the position of Executive Minister.

### **Our World**

- For the past 40 years, the Mennonite Church in Burkina Faso, West Africa, has been involved in sharing the Good News of Jesus in a number of local languages. Donna and Loren Entz were among the first Mennonite mission workers. Lives were transformed, churches emerged and multiplied, members were disciplined and leaders trained.

In response to God's goodness and faithfulness during the past 40 years, what could the Burkina Faso church do but celebrate, and celebrate they did! From November 23 to 25, at least 1,000 people gathered, including members from all of the 25 churches and over 30 international guests. It was three days filled with worshipping, teaching, feasting, singing and dancing. Special music groups and a marching band were invited, matching outfits were worn by each church, and women stayed up all night cooking for the final meal together (for which two cows were butchered).

Praise God for the joy and commitment with which the Burkina Faso churches serve God and share God's love with others. Also continue to support our sister churches in prayer - during the celebration last week, two Mennonite members passed away and delegates were sent from the celebration to the two villages for the funerals. Pray that God's presence may be felt closely in times of joy and difficulty.

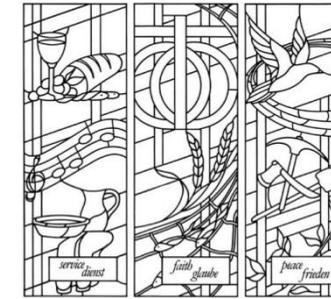
- *If you would like to add or remove any prayer requests, please contact Dan Kehler or the church office.*

### **From the Pastor:**

In my preparations for our time of Advent worship I came across this phrase "The Advent through Christmas season is about History, Mystery and Majesty." (If I am fortunate enough to track down its originator, I will be sure to give credit.) Advent is a time for us to remember *history*, where Jesus enters God's story. We tell and retell the story of Mary and Joseph, the angels and the shepherds, the wise men and the baby in manger. As we tell this story we enter the *mystery* of how this story forms our story, as a community of God's people. How does the Christ child come to us today? Where is he seen in our lives and in our time? And in faithfulness we look with hope to the future. We long for a time when Jesus comes to us in *majesty*, a time when God's plan for the world unfolds in glory and righteousness.

The Old Testament passage for the first Sunday of Advent is Jeremiah 33:14-16. It ends with the phrase "The Lord is our righteousness." This is our theme from Advent to Epiphany. Righteousness is a word used regularly through the Bible. It is often in reference to God. Righteousness is a characteristic of God. It can be an ethical term that refers to the right-ness of God. It speaks of God's desire for justice. In the Jeremiah passage, when he says that "God is our righteousness", it tells us that God is the ultimate example of what good looks and acts like.

God is still the ultimate example of right-ness and good in the world. God's righteousness has been revealed in the life and faithfulness of Jesus. God sent Jesus Christ to the earth to save us and to show us how to make the ways of justice and righteousness reign on earth. Through the life and example of Jesus, God shows us the ways of righteousness and justice in the world, calling us to follow Jesus and his teachings. In this way we too can proclaim "The Lord is our Righteousness!"



# Altona Mennonite Church

Christian Formation & Education - all ages: 9:30 am  
Sunday Worship Service: 11:00 am

VOLUME LVII No. 45

December 9, 2018

## ***The Lord is Our Righteousness Proclaiming***

Welcome

Hymn HWB #13 Blessed Jesus, at your word  
Greeting one another & announcements

### **Call to worship**

Leader: Prepare the way of the Lord, for things are about to change.

**People: Every valley shall be filled in and every mountain made low.**

Leader: As we await the coming of the Messiah, we are called to prepare our hearts for his coming.

**People: We are called to turn around, repent, and allow God to renew us and work within us.**

**All: Then we will see the salvation of our God!**

Choir Song: See Whose Glory Fills the Skies

Prayer

Lighting the Advent Candles

– Peggy Martens & Sydney Hildebrand

Hymn HWB #172 O Come, O Come, Immanuel – vs 1 & 2

OT Scripture Reading: Malachi 3:1-4

Hymn HWB #178 Come, thou long-expected Jesus

Pastor: Dan Kehler

Office Hours:

Wed. & Thur. 9:30 am to noon

Tel: 204-324-6773 (Church office)

Tel: 204-324-5178 (home)

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Secretary: Lori Hiebert

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*Altona Mennonite Church is on Treaty One Territory.*

Children's time  
Offering

NT Scripture Reading: Luke 1:67-79; Philippians 1:3-11  
Sermon Our Advent Song Pastor Dan Kehler  
Choir Song: Solemn Stillness, Weary Streets

Prayers of the congregation  
Benediction  
Hymn SS #124 My Soul Cries Out

Worship Leader: Andrea Hildebrand  
Song Leader: Loren Braul  
Accompanist(s): Gina Enns

#### **WORSHIP & MEETING EVENTS at AMC**

Dec. 16 9:00 am Rehearsal for Sunday School Program  
9:30 am Adult Christian Education  
11:00 am Worship Service

*Scripture:* Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18 *Theme:* Rejoicing in God's Justice *Worship Leader:* Norma Thiessen *Song Leader:* Kevin Neufeld  
*Accompanist(s):* Nancy Ratzlaff *Sound:* Greg Heinrichs  
*Coffee:* John & Norma Thiessen

Dec. 23 9:00 am Rehearsal for Sunday School Program  
9:30 am Adult Christian Education  
11:00 am Sunday School Program

Dec. 24 6:30 pm Candlelight Service

Dec. 25 Christmas Day Service

Dec. 30 11:00 am Worship Service

Jan. 6, 2019 11:00 am Worship Service

#### **AMC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **AMC will be hosting our neighbours from Friendship Manor** on Wednesday Dec 12, 5:30 pm for a spaghetti dinner and bingo. Please email Andrea ([andkar8052@gmail.com](mailto:andkar8052@gmail.com)) if you'd like to come or sign up in the church foyer by Monday Dec 11th. There is room for approx. 14 AMC participants.

- **From the Treasurer:** Good news! The \$18,000 furnace loan is now down to \$6,103.76, due to \$11,750 in generous member donations, along with 2 loan payments. Our Trustees were somewhat apprehensive about this project, but our faith in the generosity of AMCs has been reaffirmed.

As for the rest of the financial picture, it's not quite as good news, but not impossible! The remainder of our 3rd Quarter donations have been made, and to meet all expenses as well our 4th Quarter donations, we need \$20,000 in the next 4 Sundays. With this information, you may wish to postpone your extra furnace gift until the new year, and give toward the budget during December. Thank you.

**Birthdays:** Dec. 9 – Loren Hiebert; Dec. 10 – Perry Batchelor; Dec. 11 – Tracy Bergen

#### **COMMUNITY & MISC. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **Dec. 15 or 16 - Faith and Life Male Choir and Women's Chorus Christmas Concerts** - December 15, 7:00 PM Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg; December 16, 3:00 PM, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Altona. A freewill offering to support the choir ministry will be taken.

#### **- From the Rhineland Empty Stocking Fund**

The RESF is now accepting referrals for Christmas Hampers. Call 204-324-7167 to refer with the following information: name of referral, number of children in the family with age and gender of child, address and phone number. **Deadline for referrals is December 5.** Just a friendly reminder that the referrals must live in the R.M. of Rhineland;

- **December 8, at 9:00 a.m.,** Volunteers needed for Wrapping and packing the hampers in the empty space beside Pembina Valley Pharmacy.

- **December 15, at 9:00 a.m.,** Volunteers needed to deliver the hampers.

- Cash donations for the Empty Stocking Fund can be hand delivered to Pembina Valley Pharmacy, Rexall Drugs, at the Access Credit Union - Gretna, Altona or Plum Coulee locations or simply by mailing the donation to Rhineland Empty Stocking Fund, Box 2255, Altona, MB R0G 0B0.

- **Enrol in a CMU evening course** – for credit or audit. Options include: History of Indigenous Peoples in Canada; The Art of Preaching; Fundamentals of Marketing; The Detective in Fiction and Film; Principles and Paradigms of Youth Ministry... Seniors and alumni audit fees available. Go to [cmu.ca/timetable](http://cmu.ca/timetable) for details.

- **CMU Christmas Vespers on Sunday, Dec. 16** at 7:00 PM in the Laudamus Auditorium. Allison Pauls will lead the choir and Cheryl Pauls will be the reader. Reception to follow. See [cmu.ca/vespers](http://cmu.ca/vespers).

- **December 19, 2 – 7 pm** - Canadian Blood Services - will hold a Community **Blood Donor Clinic** at Altona Rhineland Pioneer Centre.

- **Seeds Church presents 'One Starry Night'** on Dec. 23 & 24, 7 pm at the eXchange (116 Main St. Altona). You will be invited to experience the Christmas season through story, music & dance. Doors open at 6:30 pm so come enjoy some hot cider or hot chocolate before the production begins. Everyone welcome!

#### **Check Bulletin Board for Posters about...**

- Dec. 15 or 16 – Faith and Life Christmas concerts
- Bible Land Israel Tour Feb.5-14/19
- other concerts, classes, newsletters.

The bulletin inserts bring the stories of Advent and Epiphany together with the realities of Bethlehem and the Holy Land today. The meditations follow the Christmas narratives, from the angel's announcement to Mary, to Herod's massacre of the baby boys of Bethlehem. Advent is a time for us to remember where Jesus enters God's story and our own stories, to remember what it means to live righteously, and to look to the future as we seek God's plan for us as faithful individuals and faithful communities. The meditations come from the Mennonite Church Manitoba Working Group on Palestine and Israel.